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ABSTRACT

In this speech, the author proposes a comprehensive study of professional, industrial, and business employment needs, and of the relaticnship of these needs to educational programs and services in the state of Texas. The proposal for action addresses statewide concern for the current lack of correlation between educational programs and career opportunities and between market demand for and supply of college graduates. Heretofore, such concern has brought examination by sectors within the context of particular areas, e.g., business leaders approaching it as a business matter, educators approaching it as an educational matter, and industry approaching it as a manpower matter. It is hoped that the talents and resources of state and Federal Government, education, private industry, private foundations, professional organizations, and of all who are touched by the problem can be combined to find and implement solutions to the problem. (HS)

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A Study for Texas:

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND THE ECONOMY

An Address by

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In an address to the Panhandle Press Association at Amarillo, Texas, on April 22, 1972, Wayne E. Thomas, chairman of the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System, proposed a comprehensive study of professional, industrial and business employment needs, and of the relationship of these needs to educational programs and state services.

As Mr. Thomas comments, "The proposal is one which could have a major impact on the economy of the state, on the direction of higher education, and on the welfare of all people of Texas." The proposal for action addresses statewide concern for what Mr. Thomas describes as, "the current lack of "match" between educational programs and career opportunities and between market demand for and supply of college graduates."

Heretofore, such concern has brought, for the most part, examination by given sectors within the context of a particular area, e.g. business leaders approaching it as a business matter, educators approaching it as an educational matter, and industry approaching it as a manpower matter.

It is with the hope that the talents and resources of state and federal government, education, private industry, private foundations, professional organizations, and of all who are touched by the problem can be combined to find and to implement solutions to the problem that these remarks have been made available.

Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System
State Finance Building · Austin, Texas 78711
May, 1972

A Study for Texas:
Education, Employment and the Economy

It is a real pleasure and honor to be with you today. I am particularly honored when I consider that we are in the midst of a presidential election year and about two weeks away from a primary election in Texas. Yet you distinguished members of the Fourth Estate have offered to be a captive audience for one who is, first, not joining the crowded field of Democratic presidential hopefuls; who is, second, not using this platform either to endorse or accuse any candidate for state office; and who, third, has neither written a memo to nor received one from International Telephone and Telegraph.

However, I am going to talk with you today about a proposal that I think should be placed on every politician's agenda, upon the priority list of every state planner, and, hopefully, in the columns of newspapers across the state.

The proposal is one which could have a major impact on the economy of the state, on the direction of higher education, and on the welfare of all people of Texas. It addresses directly our concern for the current lack of "match" between educational programs and career opportunities and between market demand for and supply of college graduates.

Correct Mismatch Between Programs and Opportunities

I believe we can move to correct this situation because we have a base of success and progress in Texas higher education upon which to build. Texas has done a good job in planning for the expansion of educational opportunities. Let me tell you why I can make that statement. First, when the new colleges which were recommended by the Coordinating Board and approved by the last Legislature open their doors, there will be an institution of higher education within a 50-mile radius of 95 percent of the college-going population in Texas. I think that's quite a record.

Not only has Texas furnished geographic access to college but financial access as well. Our unique Hinson-Hazlewood College Student Loan Program has served as a model for other states. Since the first loan was

made in Fall 1966, almost 68,000 students have received help to go to college through our state loan program.

I think you in the Panhandle can justifiably point with pride to the role you've played in making that program a reality—your own Senator Grady Hazlewood was instrumental in sponsoring the legislation and the Opportunity Plan initiated at West Texas State University helped to shape the outline of the state loan program.

Another aid program approved by the last Texas Legislature is the Tuition Equalization Grants Program. It was designed to help needy students attend private colleges and to utilize spaces there rather than forcing the state to pay for new buildings and programs in public universities. During its first year of operation almost 2,200 students have received grants to attend 44 different private colleges. The average grant per student is for slightly more than $385 a year.

In addition, the state has 23 other programs which provide assistance for students wishing to go to college. The state furnishes graduate fellowships and scholarships and exempts from payment of fees such students as valedictorians, veterans, deaf or blind students, orphans, low-income students, etc. In fact, *more than 90 percent of Texas students requesting financial aid in the 1969–70 academic year had such aid awarded to them.* We are proud of that record.

Texas has also provided opportunity for those students who wish to prepare for a trade which does not call for a baccalaureate degree. We have expanded the vocational-technical opportunities for students through our open-door community junior colleges and technical institutes quite dramatically. More than 95 percent of post-high school vocational education in Texas is done in our community colleges.

Yes, Texas has done a good job in providing educational opportunities.

There Are Danger Signals

If we have been successful in providing spaces, what are our problems? Let me read you a statement: "Many of today's social and economic ills result from a lack of employment among the able-bodied. This lack of employment stems directly from inadequate education and training. Certain segments of our educational system are antiquated and obsolete and must be updated if we are to successfully meet our growing domestic crisis."

This statement, I believe, summarizes the challenge for those of us in

higher education today. It was made by James A. Rhodes, former governor of Ohio, in his book entitled, *Alternatives To A Decadent Society.*

Let me cite just a few of the danger signals. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, if current trends continue between 1970 and 1980 there will be about 2.4 million openings for elementary and high school teachers. About 4.2 million newly-trained teachers will become available to fill those openings. Meanwhile, positions in law enforcement, library science, social work, and many other fields lie vacant for want of trained personnel.

Also, a recent analysis by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities reveals that 1980 employment patterns indicate demand will be below the norm in humanities, education, and fine arts, while degree production in those areas will be above the norm. Conversely, in areas where the *demand* is above the median—in such areas as city planning and health—state colleges and universities are *below* the median in their degree production.

These are disquieting data. They indicate, without a doubt, that there is an urgent need to establish educational priorities and direct our resources to the area of highest priority if we are to preserve the vitality and quality of higher education. As one of my colleagues recently remarked, "Education for too long has been a many-splintered thing."

Economic Situation Dictates Action

The mismatch in programs and professional needs becomes even more critical when considered in light of the present economy. Significant amounts of money probably will not be available to finance new programs in colleges and universities. Yet, paradoxically, new programs are essential if we are to maintain high quality and relevancy. Also, individuals who have invested four or more years in their higher education should have some assurance that what they have learned has prepared them for those job opportunities which are available.

I think the course of action becomes clearer. New programs which are needed must be initiated, but existing programs which are low in priority and are not educationally or economically sound must be phased out. This policy sounds easy, but implementing it without careful planning and good information could result in chaos.

The Coordinating Board is responsible for approving or disapproving

the addition of all new degree programs in public institutions of higher education in the state. The Board also has the mandate to order the initiation of new programs as they are needed for the welfare of the state and its citizens, and likewise, to discontinue programs that are no longer needed.

Such decisions cannot be arbitrary. A lot of study precedes decisions about which programs are important and which are irrelevant or obsolescent.

During the 1970–71 academic year, the Coordinating Board asked Texas colleges and universities to study their offerings and to trim unproductive programs. As a result, institutions voluntarily discontinued five doctoral programs, 54 master's programs and options, and five baccalaureate programs.

We believe that a constant re-evaluation of program offerings and a phasing out of old programs is essential to the continued vitality of our colleges and universities, and we have made a start in making that policy a reality. The Board is not reluctant to take a leadership role in this effort, but we are aware that program re-evaluations can best be done by the institutions with the guidance of the Board.

The vital questions become: "Which programs are no longer needed?" "What new programs are needed which we do not have?" The Coordinating Board, and I am sure institutions of higher education, other state agencies, and professional and business organizations have tried to find answers to these questions, but the efforts have been piecemeal—profession by profession, job by job, program by program.

Manpower Study Needed to Match People, Program, Industry Needs

What I am proposing today is the initiation of an extensive and statewide manpower study which will combine the talents and resources of state and federal government, education, private industry, private foundations, professional organizations, and all who are touched by this problem. The study would be one of great comprehensiveness, designed to guide not only higher education planning but state services to individuals, future directions of industry, individual planning of careers, and, in fact, the welfare of the entire State of Texas.

Such a study would not only identify present needs but also identify, as nearly as possible, future needs, especially in the professions.

The manpower study we suggest goes far beyond the concept of "manpower" as a derivative of "horsepower." In equating career education and manpower needs, we are thinking of manpower as the whole "power of man"—the use of human potential in ways that most effectively serve individuals and the society in which they live. We are also defining "careers" to include all that a person is going to do and be.

It is a large and necessary step forward to educate and prepare people for jobs which are there instead of training them for jobs which are not there, but we must be considering the *whole* of their lives.

Colleges and universities have an obligation to develop the intellect, to encourage the abilities and talents of students, to cultivate the full human personality. However, as the president of Grambling College pungently commented recently, "Education is also supposed to help you make a living." I believe these two broad purposes are not in conflict but should be complementary.

While it is essential to gear education more directly to society's needs, for people's services and to the opportunities there will be for them, those needs and those opportunities are (1) not constant and (2) not reliably reflected in projections or present measures of employment and manpower needs.

As W. Willard Wirtz, former Secretary of Labor and now director of the Manpower Institute, points out, "There is a danger in relying too much on employment and manpower statistics as now currently kept, even though they are carefully kept and unquestionably accurate." If applied too literally, warns Wirtz, those figures can become "facts that are enemies of the truth." "The truth about the matter," according to Wirtz, is that "when unemployment gets down to about 3.5 percent, most of the people who are not working are idle because they aren't equipped to do the jobs which are available." Wirtz also figures that if we were measuring the *non-use of human potential* rather than just "unemployment" the figure would probably be between 34 and 65 percent.

Current manpower figures measure which people are in which places but reflect nothing of the quality of their performance or nothing of how effectively their performance meets either their own needs or society's needs. In other words, the comprehensive manpower study we are proposing must be set firmly on a more sophisticated and comprehensive data base than anything this state has ever known before.

Planning Is Not Keeping Pace With Change

The needs of society are changing. We need to launch a full-scale effort to determine where that change is taking us and what knowledge, what skills, what services, what organizations we now need. Some of you have heard me talk about that rate of change before, but let's just look briefly again at the changes which have occurred in the last *single* lifetime.

The vast majority of the materials which are part of our lives today have all been invented or produced in that lifetime. Our society's relationship to resources has changed dramatically not once—but twice. At the beginning of this time span, our economy was based on agriculture. The first shift was to an economy based on industry, with the predominance of workers being production, or blue collar workers. The economy base has again shifted to a supra-industrial or technological economy.

Even before 1960, our society employed more white collar than blue collar workers. The majority of our workers are in retail trades, education, administration, communication, research professions, and other service categories.

Our national, state, city, and educational planning has not kept pace with that change.

I was most impressed with the recent remarks of Dr. Philip Hoffman, president of the University of Houston, as he discussed just one area of change. That area had to do with the relationship between the campus and our nation's ability to compete in the world marketplace.

According to Dr. Hoffman, higher education has been drawn into the global struggle for technological leadership and the dominant position for world markets. It has been drawn into this position because the U.S. posture in world trade has been steadily deteriorating. Our nation now faces the prospect of continuing an overall trade deficit for the first time since the 1890's.

Dr. Hoffman says that our colleges and universities must accept a share of the responsibility for this condition because they have not pursued a proper and accepted role of providing enough fundamental objective information on a matter of prime national concern. Let me share with you one paragraph from Dr. Hoffman's remarks.

"Our scholars have discussed many aspects of world trade, but too much I suspect among themselves and in learned journals of limited circulation.

We need to speak out emphatically, after appropriate fact finding, concerning philosophical interrelationships between science and technology, increased productivity, the acceleration of nonmilitary research and development, leadership and technology and closing the gap between the laboratory and effective marketing of improved processes and products. Above all, our institutions of higher learning must recognize and accept responsibilities in areas such as world trade, which inevitably touch the very core of the national well being and the quality of life in America."

If we are to improve the well being and the quality of life in the nation, *then our job is to start in the State of Texas.*

Identify New Careers, Design New Programs

We must identify changing and emerging careers in education, environment, health, welfare, community services, justice, government, world trade, and other areas. We must also seek the best means of preparing individuals—the young, the older youths, and adults—for these changing careers.

Information about careers and educational programs must also be made available to the students of our colleges and universities—through their high school and college counselors, through the news media, through any other effective ways. The customers of educational programs have a right to know as much as possible about how to make their educational and career choices.

If we can effectively match programs and career opportunities, we can help students and their parents avoid spending years and money to prepare for a profession which is already overcrowded. Such planning also means a saving to taxpayers who would otherwise be asked to supply funds for programs to re-train students for a different profession.

While it would be inappropriate to expect our colleges and universities to solve the nation's underlying and very fundamental employment problems, it would be irresponsible for our colleges and universities not to provide the problem solvers of the future.

The Coordinating Board is charged with setting state priorities, instigating innovations, and improving the procedures and content of post-high school education.

We must re-evaluate what we are doing in light of new needs. But first

we must identify those needs through this comprehensive manpower study that I am proposing today. This search for an equitable relationship between people, programs, state needs, and state resources will dictate that we explore new organizations and administrative structures for higher education. It will also dictate that we evaluate new programs, new instructional techniques, and new kinds of learning experiences.

In a time of diminishing financial resources available to instruct an increasing number of students, we must improve the effectiveness of instructional procedures and find economical ways of bringing those services to students. Such new procedures may include some "universities without walls," which allow students to learn away from campuses under the guidance of faculty members. We need to explore the possibilities of granting credit-by-examination for knowledge acquired outside classrooms, of shortening the time required to earn a baccalaureate degree, of utilizing stop-out programs, adult and continuing education programs, exchange programs between the worlds of work and education. We must produce more and better quality with less money. We must use our resources to improve effectiveness, to maintain diversity, but *not* to multiply mediocrity.

Coordinate State-Federal Efforts

Another important area of the concern that such a manpower study as we are proposing would serve is the coordination of federal-state support of higher education. As a state senator from a midwestern state commented recently, "The situation in Washington is confused, but I am confident it will deteriorate."

It is important that we establish priorities for the development of higher education and that those priorities be preserved and moved forward by assistance which is available through the federal government. Too frequently, we at the state level are faced with the accomplished fact of a grant from either a public or private source supporting a program at a state university which the state indeed does not need and which the state cannot continue to support when the outside finances are no longer available.

I don't want to be misunderstood. I believe that Federal support of higher education is important and accounts for much of the progress we have made throughout the 60's and 70's. What I am saying is that those monies should be used so that they advance and not thwart state priorities.

In summary, we have made progress in this state in providing educational opportunity for all our citizens. We must now turn our efforts toward matching the goals of our higher educational institutions with the changing needs of individuals and society.

I would urge our state officials, our educational leaders, our business and professional leaders to lend their support to a comprehensive, all-encompassing manpower study.

I know we must, and I believe we can, make our colleges and universities, our government, and our private industry responsive both to the needs of individuals and to the needs of our state and our nation.